

South Lanarkshire College
BOARD OF MANAGEMENT MEETING
Held on Tuesday, 1 December 2020 at 1730 hours

Present in Boardroom A McKechnie, J Carratt, P Hughes, R Harkness, G McClarence,
L Hughes

Present on MS Teams A Kerr (Chair), S Dillett, C Gibb, C McDowall, P Donnelly, P Hughes,
P Hutchinson, Y Johnston, C McDonald

Apologies L Glen, S Duffy, R Smith

In attendance: K McAllister, T Gardner

1. Declaration of members interests

Membership of the Lanarkshire Board was declared by A Kerr, A McKechnie, R. Harkness, J Carratt and G McClarence. Mr Kerr also declared his membership of the Scottish Funding Council.

2. Minutes of previous meetings

The minutes of the 15 September 2020 Board meeting were approved by the Board.

Minutes of the Special Board of Management meeting of 11 November were approved by the Board.

3. Matters arising

Arising from the minute of the 15 September, it was noted that the matter relating to the funding allocation was now resolved and that we are still awaiting guidance from the Scottish Funding Council regarding the Regional Outcome Agreement process.

4. Chair's update

The Chair provided an update on progress with regard to the route map for the dissolution of the regional arrangements and advised the Board that there has been no further information received from the Scottish Funding Council. AMK advised that the College is currently collating a list of issues, actions and costs/savings relating to dissolution.

The Chair advised of the proposal to hold one or more Board Strategy half day(s), the first of which would take place in January/February 2021. He asked members to consider topics to be covered, and he noted that college finance should be on the list for a Board development session as this had been raised by Board Members during previous one to one meetings. It is hoped that it might be possible to host these on campus. He advised that other governance matters would be considered at the March meeting: member refresh; member appraisal; committee remits, etc.

The Chair noted that Angus had now retired and that we were awaiting the arrival of the new Depute Principal and new HR Manager. The Chair requested that the video presentation made

on the occasion of Angus's retiral be circulated to Board Members (attached in zipped folder) and he also requested that the welcome back video message by himself and the Principal be circulated as previously discussed (circulated on 18 September – https://southlanarkshire-my.sharepoint.com/:f/g/personal/csumner_slc_ac_uk/EmNG5hweqHxLoLeoOJCe-LQBIOy9ukjpyAly6C7MY7u00w?e=IYql5o).

5. Principal's update

The Principal advised that she would provide an overview of college business, taking in COVID response; the new academic session; economic response; and key college successes, before offering a specific update on the approach to curriculum refresh.

The key focus of the College remains to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of the college community, with a robust approach to risk assessment. The College continues to follow all SG and public health guidance on working safely on campus; and works closely with the Trade Unions and the Student Association. There is now in place a cross-education system protocol with NHS Lanarkshire.

AMK provided an update on the shift from Tier 3 to 4 and the revised approach to restricted blended delivery, which confirmed that the current operation was at less than one-third capacity on campus on any one day with plans to reduce this further for the rest of the term. She noted the partnership working with UWS to provide testing to those students who are travelling across the UK at Christmas time.

AMK advised that all of these ongoing changes have increased anxiety across the College community and that there is work in train to offer support, advice and guidance to staff and students. A number of staff and student notices, and a video have been issued to provide an update on the most recent SG and UKG guidance on new restrictions. A student pulse survey has just concluded and plans are progressing to conduct a staff survey (the HSE Organisational Stress Risk assessment) in the near future.

In relation to the new academic session, AMK advised that the college continues to operate in a restricted blended way with most staff and all students only on campus on a part-time basis. Recruitment figures were positive in comparison to last year; and the College is now marketing a number of courses for a January intake, which are already filling up.

In relation to digital poverty, AMK noted that the SFC digital funding has been fully invested in IT kit for students, which have been allocated on a long-term loan basis. She noted that there were c.400 applications for c.200 laptops and that work was in train to meet the demand (through refurbished laptops and other laptops due for disposal, which we will refurbish and give to students on the waiting list). This will leave 13 spare laptops as we look into January and a new cohort of students.

AMK noted that, as we continue to have a high level of remote working, the cyber security threat level and risk to college systems is still considered high. There are robust systems in place for monitoring, detecting and mitigating against potential threats. The College is

considering the introduction of multi-layer authentication across some users to further secure systems access.

AMK advised that there is close working with South Lanarkshire Council and SDS to understand local and regional economic trends; that the College is a member of a new cross-Lanarkshire Economic Forum which will allow the two colleges and UWS to work in partnership with other parts of the enterprise and skills system to support social and economic recovery. She noted that the College is currently considering the curriculum offer, supported by a graduate researcher, to analyse our reach into industry requirements.

AMK concluded her update by noting that, personally, she continues to engage with the Colleges Principal Group, supporting the drafting of the Colleges Scotland Spending Review Submission; working with the sector on widening access ambitions; and working with SDS and SG on the new approach to PACE and to the Youth Employability Guarantee Scheme. She has also been invited to participate in the Inaugural Review of Quality Assurance in Education and Training Boards in Ireland, which will commence next Spring.

AMK noted that, over the recent period, the College has secured a number of awards and commendations: the LGBTI Youth Scotland Silver Charter Mark Award; highly commended for the CDN Inclusive College Award; we are in receipt of the Going Further for Student Carers Recognition Award from the Carers Trust Scotland; and were just last week awarded the Pledge Award 2020 on the final day of Estranged Students Solidarity Week; and the Cycling Friendly Award with distinction. The visibility of the College in print and social media has increased significantly over the period. She concluded by advising that we are currently organising our Graduation Ceremony for 2 February – this will be a digital event.

The Chair agreed that the press coverage was positive and suggested that these should be circulated to Board Members. AMK advised that she currently shares updates via LinkedIn. P Hughes asked about the circulation of press clippings to Board members. AMK suggested this might be the Colleges Scotland digest but will check. Y Johnston commended AMK and the team for all the positive activity and noted the value of the features placed on LinkedIn.

The Principal then provided an update on the College approach to curriculum development. She noted that the curricular offer was developed in a number of ways, including horizon scanning using national and regional sources of labour market intelligence from national bodies, SDS, SSC, ES. The College also tests its offer against demand and removes courses where there is no or reduced demand, or significant early withdrawals and new courses are introduced in response to demand or to opportunity. She advised of the establishment of two new skills academies, in Insulated Render and in Dry Lining; that SLC is one of only three colleges delivering the new Pathways to Apprenticeship in construction; and that we are currently refreshing our Flexible Workforce Development Fund prospectus in light of the new funding for SMEs. We are also seeking to access new Government schemes, such as Kickstart, the Youth Guarantee Scheme, the Transition Training Fund and the Green Economy Fund.

AMK noted that P Hughes has agreed that further updates and discussion on curriculum refresh should come to the Development Committee in the New Year.

DRAFT

Annual Complaints Handling Report

AMK provided an overview of the report, noting that lessons learned have been discussed and actions agreed with relevant departments.

C Gibb noted two specific complaints – one for the car park which AMK confirmed was not upheld. A second complaint remains outstanding and is now being actively progressed. AMK asked for the Board's approval to publish the report – this was agreed.

6.1 Audit and Risk Committee

The Chair provided an overview of the recent Committee meeting. He advised that the draft Annual Report of the External Auditors to the Board of Management and the Auditor General for Scotland had been approved by the Committee for consideration by the Board. He confirmed that this was a positive report. The report was approved by the Board.

The Internal Audit report on Credits Return 2019/20 was discussed and approved by the Board.

The Annual Report of the Audit Committee to the BOM was confirmed for circulation to the SFC and to Audit Scotland. The report was approved by the Board.

It was noted that the Risk Register consideration by the Committee would consider a summary of the COVID RAID logs at its next meeting. The risk associated with dissolution was noted.

6.2. Finance and Resources Committee

C Gibb noted that the F&R committee meeting had taken place immediately following the Audit Committee meeting. She advised that the financial statements were now showing a deficit. She advised that the Committee had agreed to make up the deficit over the next two years; and that it would consider an updated budget at its next meeting. She advised that the Committee had considered the matter of consumable spend and academic supply and that there would be merit in ensuring an enhanced approach to procurement and inventory control. She confirmed that the Committee was content that the financial statements were accurate and presented them for approval to the Board.

K McAllister provided an update on the management forecast. He noted a projected reduction in income given the COVID position. He noted a risk to student numbers given the current blended/remote delivery; and advised that the College is working hard to secure retention, and to build up other funding streams via SG programmes on employability. He noted the ambitions to generate other sources of alternative income and to empower all college departments to be held accountable for their budgetary management. We anticipate a reduction in some funded activity. Budgets have now been issued to all business areas to secure increased accountability for income and expenditure (there has been a 25% reduction on the 2019-20 allocation to seek to secure savings).

C Gibb noted that we do not have an estates strategy, and that the Committee has asked for a report which demonstrated control over estates and capital spend. The procurement report was noted.

The following were approved:-

- Draft Annual Financial Statements for 2019/20
- Additional updated budget 2020/21

6.3. Development Committee

The Chair of the Committee presented the minutes of the meeting which took place on 3 November 2020. The Board approved the minute; and noted that quality enhancement remained a key focus for the College leadership team; and that the Academic Board is scheduled to take place on 4 December 2020.

The Chair noted the move away from traditional channels to digital media and recognised the increased visibility of the College in social and other media, particularly recent publications as part of the Herald's Future Education campaign. P Hughes enquired as to whether the Marketing report was not distributed with the Board papers. AMK confirmed that this had not been previous practice but that this would take place going forward. P Hughes asked about daily press cuttings – AMK confirmed that the Colleges Scotland brief would be circulated to Board members.

6.4 Human Resources Committee

The Chair of the Committee presented the minutes of the meeting which took place on 11 November 2020. He noted that the Committee Terms of Reference had been updated and would come to the Board in due course. He advised that the COVID protocol with NHS Lanarkshire was a positive innovation. He advised the College continued to focus on mental health & wellbeing. He noted that a programme of HR policy refresh was in train. AMK indicated that some policies may need to be agreed at national level via the NJNC. The Chair confirmed that horizon scanning will be a standing item going forward.

J Carratt advised that some staff are concerned about the current EIS ballot and some of the related messaging. AMK advised of the regular senior engagement with the JNC; and confirmed that national employment issues would be considered at the HR Committee.

In terms of sharing reports with the Board, C McDowall noted that care would be required in relation to the content of some of the HR reports. C Gibb enquired about forward planning for staff, for example retirees. The Chair confirmed we have the Workforce Planning report. AMK advised that the staff demographic was under active consideration; and that there would be an HR focus in the New Year on succession planning and talent management and that we are working on a termination policy to better understand why people are leaving – including the introduction of exit interviews. C McDowall noted the value of the Glass Door website.

P Donnelly suggested that we might review reporting to the Board at a development day to ensure the Chairs of Committees are well supported.

7. Student Association Update

G McClarence provided an update on the activities of the SA, noting that mental health continued to remain a key area of focus. She advised that the COVID Resilience Workshops will continue in January; that the SA had successfully applied for the Think Positive Grant

scheme and had been awarded £375. She noted a high level of engagement of students; and that the SA was working hard, and creatively, to reach out to all students .

C Gibb advised that she is always impressed the effort and energy invested by the Student President & Vice President.

9. AOB

P Hutchinson noted that the SLC Foundation Trust requires additional members and asked for a volunteer Board member to support the work of the Trust. Board members to contact P Hutchinson directly.

There being no further competent business, the Chair closed the meeting by thanking everyone for their attendance and contribution and passed on his best wishes for the festive season.

DRAFT